CHURCH DIVINITY SCHOOL
of the Pacific

CROSS ROADS

olume 25 February, 1950 Number 3

The Journal of The Rural Workers' Fellowship

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Arts and Crafts in the Town-Country Church

Know Your County Extension Staff

A Summary of the Mt. Vernon Seminar Lectures

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The Journal of the Rural Workers' Fellowshp of the Episcopal Church. Formerly published as the Rural Messenger

The Objectives of the R. W. F.

1. To promote the interest of the whole Church in developing an effective ministry to town and country areas.
2. To increase fellowship among rural workers and those interested in rural community life; and
3. To aid the National Council in its program and its service to rural workers.

Editorial Board: The Chairman of the Joint Commission on Rural Work (The Rt. Rev. Richard Bland Mitchell); Dr. William V. Dennis; Mrs. Clifford Samuelson; The Rev. Maxwell Brown.

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EDITORIAL

TWO IMPORTANT MEETINGS concerned with town and country work have taken place since the last issue. One, the large Home Missions Congress at Columbus, and the other the annual Seminar on Town and Country work sponsored by the Department of Town and Country of the Province of the Mid-West. This latter was held this year at Mt. Vernon, Illinois, in the Diocese of Springfield. At both meetings the Rural Workers' Fellowship was represented, and had an opportunity to present its cause. We present in this issue a summary of the main lectures at the Mt. Verson meetings, summarized by the Dean of Quincy, the Very Rev. E. J. Bubb. Dean Bubb has always been interested in town and country work, and besides carrying on the work at the Cathedral he finds time to minister to two rural congregations.

The Church press has carried considerable news about the Columbus meeting, but it is encouraging to realize that our Episcopal Church has long recognized its task in town and country and is engaged successfully in many of the aspects of work recommended by the Congress. Yet we all know how great the task is ahead of us, and that our efforts should not and must not lessen, rather, must increase in intensity and devotion.

To return to the Mt. Vernon seminar. A few words are in order to describe the effective work being conducted by the Town and Country Department of the Fifth Province. This is one of the few such departments within the Church organized on the provincial level, and the work it does stimulates the thinking and the acting of the entire province. The department meets twice a year, once at synod, and the other meeting in conjunction with the annual seminar it conducts. At this seminar representatives from all dioceses come together for the week to study specific town and country church problems and opportunities.

The theme last year was the use of the Prayer Book as an evangelistic medium in town and country work. This year the theme was "Practical Theology in Town and Country Church Work". The subject was ably presented by the Rev. Dargan Butt of Seabury-Western Seminary. Also on the program was a presentation of the work of the associated mission in Waukesha Co. Wis-

consin by the Dean of the work, the Very Rev. Victor Boile; likewise a problem forum to discuss problems raised by those attending the seminar; and a presentation of reports of activities on each diocese in the town and country field. Every diocese within the province was represented, and the seminar was also fortunate in having both Bishop Clough and Bishop Page present for the sessions. Around fifty men and women attended. The host diocese and mission pays for the rooms of the guests, the provincial department pays for the meals, and each diocese pays the travel expenses of its delegates. The seminar is always on a very high spiritual plane, this one particularly so, and the inspiration and knowledge coming from the meetings have helped many dioceses to establish better directed town and country departments or commissions to spread the Church's work in this important area. The chairman of the provincial department, the Rev. Samuel Keys of Waynesville, Ohio, will be glad to send anyone further information as to the department's work and organization.

EDITOR RESIGNS: The editor of CROSSROADS, the Rev. Wm. Spoffard, Jr., has resigned his post because of heavy demands on his time. He explains in his letter of resignation that he has been taking post-graduate work at the University of Michigan, and has entered his final semester. Since he must devote considerable time to his thesis this Spring, as well as carrying on the full load of a parish, he asks to be relieved of his position with CROSSROADS, as he feels he cannot do justice to the work. The Board of Directors of the R.W.F. accepts the resignation with regret, and we hope he can give us his good direction and help at some later date. Bill, as many of you know, has been very interested in town and country work for some time, and last summer was on the staff at the National Town and Country Institute at Roanridge. We know his interest in this field has not diminished, but continues with us. Until the next meeting of the Board of Directors, the president of the R.W.F. will act as editor of CROSSROADS.

USING LOCAL TALENTS TO improve the beauty of church property has been done by many town and country clergy. No better method is known for stimulating and retaining interest in the Church's activities. In this issue we present an article by a

person whose artistic talents are well known in this country, and who has done considerable work in directing local people as they plan and execute the decoration of their church building. Dom Francis Hilary Bacon, of the Order of St. Benedict, writes with authority and experience. If any of you have visited the Benedictine monastary, St. Gregory's Priory, near Three Rivers, Michigan, you have seen the beautiful chapel created under the artistic direction of Dom Francis Hilary from the crude materials of a quonset hut, with little money to spend. The Episcopal Church in Three Rivers has also benefited from his artistic direction.

In his article Arts and Crafts in the Town and Country Church, Dom Francis Hilary gives some practical methods of beautifying any church building at little cost. We are sure you will find it useful.

Incidentally, whenever you are in the vicinity of Three Rivers, Michigan (just a few miles south of Kalamazoo) it will pay you to visit St. Gregory's Priory. These Anglican Benedictines are doing a fine piece of work in an open country area in establishing excellent relationships with the farmers, who are learning more and more about the Episcopal Church. The fathers at the monastary will welcome you.

A COMMUNICANT AND ACTIVE member of the Episcopal Church, Mr. F. Earl Haas, writes an article to assist us in knowing better the duties of the Cooperative Extension Services. Mr. Haas is Assistant County Agent in Land Use Planning for Southwestern Michigan, and is doing a fine piece of work in helping town and country people make better use of community group planning for the improvement of all aspects of their life. Besides his activities with problems of others during the week, Mr. Haas finds time to teach a junior high school group in Sunday School. Almost without exception the extension specialists in your county are men and women anxious to get acquainted with and work in cooperation with churches in their area. You can find they will gladly give you all kinds of help in your work. Likewise you can aid them in many things they are doing to help your community to be a better place in which to live. As Mr. Haas says: "get acquainted" with your county extension staff. Offer them your

services. You will be happily surprised how much you can work together in many programs for your people, and for the entire county.

The Rural Workers' Fellowship Branch in the Fifth Province held their semi-annual meeting in conjunction with the seminar at Mt. Vernon. New officers elected are: Branch president, Capt. Robert Jones, Church Army, of Hillman, Michigan. Secretary, the Rev. John Battle, of Pontiac, Illinois. Capt. Jones will also be the R.W.F. Provincial Representative for the Fifth Province on the National Board.

The Provincial Representative for the Eighth Province, the Rev. Arthur Freeman reports that the Rev. Charles Conder of Thermal, Calif., is the official Diocesan officer for the R.W.F. in the Diocese of Los Angeles; the Rev. Schuyler Pratt of Hollister acts in the same capacity for the Diocese of California; and Mr. Joseph Scott of Tulare, who is studying for Holy Orders, is the representative for the District of San Joaquin.

As many of you know, the purpose of having provincial representatives is to maintain our "grass-roots" heritage. These representatives act to spread the good word about the R.W.F., to obtain members, and to speak for the organization where given an opportunity. They also encourage the estsablishment of provincial and diocesan branch groups of the R.W.F. Where a branch group exists it elects the representative, otherwise the national board of directors appoints the person. The provincial representative also appoints, (unless the person is elected) diocesan representatives who do the same type of work on the diocesan level. If your province or diocese is not organized contact your provincial representative whose name is listed in the back of this issue.

ARTS AND CRAFTS IN THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH

By Dom Francis Hilary Bacon, O.S.B.

As a prescript to this subject it will be well to bear in mind that I do not presume to advise any structural changes in a church building. This is usually done only according to the Canons of the Church. With this in mind I offer here ways and means whereby our churches may be beautified with recourse to local arts and crafts.

There are some fundamental rules which govern all art and some which are applicable to church art in particular. The first rule is that art always is honest. By this I mean never to fake in order to get an effect. Our church is the fortress of truth. Let this also apply to its decoration. We all have seen artificial stained glass windows in churches, paper printed with a colored design and stuck on the glass. Such artificiality outrages our sense of honesty. It is far better to have plain or tinted glass until good stained glass, which is in keeping with the church, can be procured. Even in some of our more prosperous churches I have seen real stained glass with electric lights behind them. In this way they lose all the lovely changing variety of light that comes through the day. Never be ashamed of good honest material, no matter how simple.

The center of interest in any church is the altar, and it should therefore attract the eye. Many people rely upon the altar lights and cross to do this, and they do serve their purpose to this end. Nevertheless, an altar which cannot be seen in a dimly lighted church misses the opportunity of teaching one of the church's greatest lessons . . . the lesson of sacrifice. The altar is the throne of God upon which the Sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ is offered to the Eternal Father. The altar is the primary reason for having a church, and consequently it, and its immediate surroundings, should be the most beautiful part of the church building.

Many ladies know that vertical lines impart a sense of slender dignity, and in the selection of her clothes, the stylish stout lady will select clothes which have a narrow, vertical stripe in order to

give the impression of height. She will always shun large patterns. This rule is as true in the decoration of a church as it is in the question of apparel. A church with a low ceiling and considerable width should never have a broad stencil border running horizontally around it, nor should it have a dark wood skirting contrasting with a light wall.

As to colors: dark colors on the walls give the illusion that the room is smaller than it is. Light colors make a room appear larger than it is. Speaking generally, the safest treatment for a church is to have the large surfaces covered with a neutral tint, putty or stone color, against which any decoration in the ancient liturgical colors, scarlet, cobalt blue, and gold, will appear to their best advantages. These colors are to be used for an over-all pattern on the ceiling, walls of the sanctuary, or perhaps only in the fittings of the sanctuary. Many of our churches are uninviting and cheerless because of the lack of color. It is truly remarkable what the application of the right colors can do to bring them back to life. Do not be afraid of color. A space as large as a church can stand a good deal of it, but try to confine the color to the decoration or fixtures.

With these basic ideas in mind we can turn to some particular applications.

The old "dresser" type of altar is, in most instances, neither beautiful nor practical. By "dresser" type I mean the narrow ones with the high gradines and panels in back. They often have the alpha and omega or Trinity symbol of the triangle on the front panels. In the first place this type of altar is not long enough nor deep enough to allow the full beauty of the movement of the liturgy there performed. Anyone with some ability as a carpenter can remodel one of these altars and make it useful and beautiful. The dimensions of an altar should not be less than seven feet long, nor less than three feet deep, and between thirty-nine and forty-one inches from the floor to the top of the table.

First remove all above the table level at the back, except the tabernacle, if there is one. If there are half-pillars on the front remove them without damaging them. Now extend the altar at either end, and then extend the table top so that it is three or four inches longer than the base on which it rests. The half-

pillars may be replaced to cover the joints between the old part and the extended part. Or the joints may be covered with moulding, and the pillars placed at the outside corners of the altar. One gradine upon which the candles are placed is all that is necessary to add. This should be four or five inches high, and about four or five inches shorter than the length of the table.

There are many different treatments for such a re-made altar. You may enamel it in white and gild the emblems and pillars. After this is thoroughly dry it may be glazed. This is done with burnt umber in linseed oil. The whole thing is painted over with this dark color and then, while it is still wet, it must be wiped off, leaving just enough of the glaze in the mouldings and other decorations to give it a rich soft tone.

Another treatment, if there are panels in the front, is to remove the moulding of the panels and tack a rich damask fabric in each panel so that when the mouldings are replaced they will cover the heads of the tacks. The tacks used should be the smallest ones possible to obtain. The damask should be scarlet, gold or cobalt blue, or a combination of these colors.

Having a dossal behind the altar can be a very effective means of bringing color into the church. A dossal is a fabric hanging behind the altar from the floor up to ten, fifteen or twenty feet high, depending, of course, upon the height of the church. The top of it may be covered, as draperies sometimes are, with a valance, or it may hang from a long curtain pole. If the fabric hangs flat against the wall it will look the best. Orphrey material may be obtained from any ecclesiatical goods store, and makes a very effective edging for the dossal. Here again you will be most pleased if you keep to the colors I have mentioned before. A very effective means of lighting an altar is to build a little canopy from which to hang the dossal. The frame may be built of four inch wood and covered with the same damask as the dossal, and edged with the orphrey material. In the choice of the orphrey material, the bolder the pattern the better it will look. This framework forms a means for concealing a long fluorescent light in back of the front panel, and with this means of lighting there are no shadows cast upon the altar. Large silk or gold tassels may be hung at the two outer corners of the canopy.

In hanging the canopy let the means of its suspension be obvious. Nothing is more annoying than a canopy with no visible means of support. It can be done with the little brass chains which plumbers use in their work. These may be covered with braided silk cording or may be hung as plain chains after first being gilded.

One of the most important things a person should know, in attempting to decorate a church building, is the method of making stencils. I will first describe how to make an over-all pattern which may be used to cover the walls of a sanctuary. You will need a stencil knife, a large sheet of glass, a few sheets of tracing paper, and three sheets of stencil paper. The first thing is to draw the design on tracing paper. Nine and a half by twelve inches is a good size for the design,, but you must remember that the stencil paper must be three inches wider than the design on all sides because the design must be cut out while this border holds it together. In making the design there are three things to remember. The design must be bold, the idea that two colors are to be used must be borne in mind, and the design must have an ecclesiastical meaning. The cross, crown, conventional rose, fleur-de-lis, star, symbols of the passion, and hundreds of others are at your disposal. Next you must have one quarter of a key pattern in the corners of the design so that when the design is applied to the wall four times, so as to form a square, the corner design will be complete. For instance, if you decide to have a star with eight points as your corner guide design, then two of the star points must appear in each corner of your design. Draw your design completely on the sheet of tracing paper. Now you must figure where the ties are to come in such a way as not to destroy your design, and yet leave no sharp points sticking out on your stencil to catch the brush and get bent in the process of application. The ties are narrow bands which serve to hold the paper together after the design has been cut out of the stencil paper. Now trace your design on the stencil paper, using carbon paper beneath the tracing paper. Trace only the outlines of the parts to be cut out. Trace on the first sheet of stencil paper only the portions to be in red, and on the second sheet only the portions to be in blue. The third sheet is to be an outline sten-

cil. This is to be cut as a narrow band three-eighths of an inch wide, outlining the design and also tying it together. It need not only outline the colors, but may also be part of the design itself, such as stems of flowers, centers of flowers, or rays from a star, etc. This outline stencil must have ties every inch or inch and a half.

Now put your design which has been transferred to the stencil paper on the sheet of glass and cut out with the stencil knife each portion of the design to be colored. You will cut out three stencils in all, one for the red color only, one for the blue, and the third the outline stencil for which Vandyke brown or burnt umber may be used. When these stencils are cut on exactly the same size sheets of stencil paper it is time to measure the wall space to be covered. Find the exact center of the wall and snap a chalk line from the floor to the ceiling. When applying the stencils have the chalk line run exactly through the center of the first stencil applied. When you come to the corners leave them until last, and then bend the stencil so that the pattern turns the corner. Apply the stencil that has the corner key design cut out in it so that this can act as your guide in getting them straight. Use a short-bristled, round stencil brush in applying the paint, which should be a very thick paint. Dab a little of it on the end of the brush, then rub it around a little on an old board so that the paint will be spread smoothly throughout the bristles, then, holding the stencil in place with one hand, rub the brush in a circular motion over each portion of the pattern. Lift the stencil off the wall without dragging it and look at the other side to see if the paint has run over the edges. If it has, you are using too much paint, or it is too thin. Wipe the clean side of the stencil by placing it face down on a newspaper and with a soft cloth dipped in turpentine wipe gently until clean. By the time you have one wall covered with this design the first ones you applied should be dry enough so that you can start over them with the second color stencil. Last of all apply the outline stencil and it will pull the design together. If you are going to apply a border stencil where the wall meets the ceiling, take a piece of plain stencil paper the width of your border design and lay it against the wall, holding

it behind the stencil as you work. This will assure you of a clean strip of wall on which to apply your border stencil.

When brushing on the paint be very careful not to break the ties in the stencil with too vigorous scrubbing. If you break too many of them you can easily cut another stencil by stencilling the design on another piece of stencil paper and cutting out a new one with the ties in place. It may help you to put transparent tape around the edges of the stencil, leaving half of it overlapping so that it can be stuck to the wall. This will give you two hands free when applying the paint. You will find that the stencil will have to overlap somewhat the design you have already applied on the wall so that the corners will come together and there will not be a square of blank wall around each pattern applied.

You may prefer to use gold in the place of one of the colors. This is somewhat more difficult, but does look very rich on the wall. It shows up better if the wall is painted cobalt blue first and then the gold stenciled on top of it.

Stencils may also be applied to good effect on beams and in the recesses of lancet windows. Stained glass windows will show up much richer if the frames and wood supports in them are painted black.

There are many other suggestions which might be made and could easily be accomplished by the local arts and craftsmen for the beautifying of the church building. By using members of the parish to make the building more beautiful, the House of God becomes even dearer to them, and certainly God is being glorified both in the beauty of the building, and in the expression of the artist or craftsmen who give their best for God's glory and the making of beautiful places that are holy.

RURAL MEDICAL CARE

Mott, F. D. and Rosmer, M. I. RURAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL CARE, McGraw-Hill Book Co., New York, 1948. Dr. F. W. Peck of the Farm Foundation says: "This is an excellent book . . . which should be read by every worker in this field."

KNOW YOUR COUNTY EXTENSION STAFF

By F. Earl Haas

"There's a group of boys and girls in our community who are interested in planting forestry trees. How can we start a 4-H club for them?" "I've just changed hay for my dairy cows. How should I change the grain mixture?" "Our neighborhood is interested in remodeling an old schoolhouse for use as a community building. Can you furnish some plans for the work?" "Could you help me remodel the kitchen in an old farm house we just bought?" "We are changing the food service in our restaurant and are adding complete meals. Would you arrange for the food service specialist to visit our place?" "Do you have any plans for changing my barn from a stanchion type to a pen type?" "The maple trees in my front yard seem to by dying. Can you tell me what to do for them?" "Our church wants to landscape its grounds. Would you draw some plans using mostly native shrubs?"

These are typical of the many questions that are asked daily of your county extension staff. The term "extension service" may be to many just a vague term for "a fellow who does something with woodworking" or "somebody from the court house who said we'd lose less soil if we plowed around those hills instead of up and down 'em." Actually, the Cooperative Extension Service is an educational program sponsored jointly by the United States Departmen of Agriculturae and the state agricultural colleges. Usually the county government is the sponsoring agency in each county, although occasionally farm organizations, such as the Farm Bureau, furnish the local finances and supervision. The offices of the Extension Service are nearly always to be found in a county or federal building located in the county seat. The staff of the service may consist of one person—a county agricultural agent—or half dozen men and women, such as a 4-H club agent, a home demonstration agent, land use specialist, horticulturist, etc., all of whom are college graduates.

Extension work was established by the Smith-Lever Act of 1914 which stated its major purpose to be "to aid in diffusing among the people of the United States useful and practical infor-

mation on subjects relating to agriculture and home economics, and to encourage the application of the same." From the small beginning made under this act the program has been increased both in financial assistance and the scope of its work by several other federal acts—mainly, the Bankhead-Jones and Bankhead-Flannagan Acts. The total federal appropriation now reaches over 27 million dollars annually, which is about half of the total appropriation, the balance being furnished by state and county funds. Extension's early emphasis was on the immediate problems of the farm and home. Improved practices which could be measured by immediately increasing incomes or by producing better living were stressed. Today, however, a broader objective is emphasized—that of helping people learn to help themselves and to solve their own problems.

The program no longer deals only with farm people or rural residents. Many phases of it are carried on in the cities and among both young people and adults. On the agricultural side demand centers around problems of commercial agriculture, as well as home and community gardening and landscaping. On the demestic side chief interest lies in such problems as home management and furnishing, clothing, nutrition, health, efficient purchasing and wise use of food and other agricultural commodities. The program is growing, not only in the number of people and the size of areas being served, but also in the breadth of subject matter covered. More and more public appreciation is developing in the interlocking interests of all groups of society in connection with many problems of fundamental significance to all. Many of them cannot be solved by individuals acting in their own behalf, but must be approached through group action. On the community or county basis, the need for improved local health service, public school facilities, land use control in some areas, rural fire protection are typical of such problems. On a broader front are such questions as the most suitable long-time program for agriculture, tax policies, etc. Rural people as well as their neighbors in the urban areas are seeking help in finding and solving such questions, and the extension service is providing an effective educational service to meet this need.

The phase of the extension program which is probably best known due to large amounts of publicity in newspapers, magazines and radio stations is the 4-H club work. Through this voluntary program boys and girls between the ages of 10 and 21 "learn by doing"—a slogan which has characterized this rural youth program from its inception. The members work on definite projects relating to agriculture, home economics, conservation or some phase of the rural arts. Most counties have an agent who devotes most of his or her time to the youth work. In some cases he is called a county club agent, or he may be an assistant county agent, or the work may be divided between the county agent and the home agent. The club agent has charge of the 4-H program, usually with the guidance of a 4-H council of some type. He is responsible for the organization of local clubs, training of volunteer leaders, conducting county events such as camps, rally days, achievement days, fairs, picnics and sightseeing trips, etc. In a typical county there may be over a thousand girls and boys enrolled in thirty or more different projects, and this club agent must be prepared to furnish technical information on any phase of them. Judging and demonstration work which is an important part of the 4-H program may be under the immediate direction of the local leaders, or the club agent may do most of it himself, coaching and training the various teams.

The home economics program in the various counties is usually headed by a woman with the title of home demonstration agent or home extension agent. Must of this work is conducted through local groups or clubs with a local leader method of instruction among the various groups. They may be either rural or urban in nature, and in some of the more heavily populated counties there are both urban and rural home agents. In addition to teaching through the organized groups, individual assistance is available on such things as kitchen arrangement, house remodeling, flower gardening, interior decorating, family relationships, and nearly every phase of home living. In some states the home agent also assists with tourists and resort work in such plans as kitchen arrangements, meal planning, interior furnishings, etc. Occasionally the 4-H program is under the direction of this agent.

In most cases the county agricultural agent is the person in direct charge of the entire extension program in the county, although this varies in several states. The agricultural program includes such things as meetings on proper feeding of all types of farm animals, crop varieties best adapted to the area, weed control through cultivation or the use of chemicals, and any other phase of crop production. The county agent assists with the organization and management of groups such as dairy herd improvement associations, artificial breeding associations, farm management groups, etc. Farm cooperatives often call on the county agent for assistance in organizing and managing their businesses. Marketing and distribution of agricultural products is also under his supervision. Soil conservation, proper fertilization practices, and other phases of soil management are an important part of his job. The educational work may be carried on through open meetings, farm visits, office calls, news releases and radio programs.

Any of these workers may have one or more assistants to help carry on his phase of the extension program; while there is always available at the state colleges a staff of specialists who make regular visits to the county to give specific technical advice on perplexing problems. Even though the various agents are directly responsible for their own part of it, the members of the staff work together to carry out a uniform program and assist the others when necessary. In some counties there may be one or more agents who work on special phases of extension work such as land use planning which includes in addition to land uses, such social aspects as health, recreation, educational facilities, rural fire protection, road systems, conservation and other problems that the residents feel need special attention. In areas of concentrated production of certain crops, such as fruit areas, a special agent is hired to devote his entire time to that work.

From this sketch you might assume that the county extension staff is a very busy group of people and would have little time for your particular problems. Their job is to serve all the people of their county in any field that is related in any way to better living.

If you are not already acquainted with them, drop into their office for a little chat next time you are in the county seat. They will be glad to see you and may have just the answer you've been seeking to that vexing problem.

THE RELEVANCE OF THE RURAL CHURCH

Why emphasis on town-country work? First, there are people there, and the Church has a legitimate concern wherever there are people. There are men in rural areas, more men in proportion to women than there are in urban areas. There are lots of children there, and it is from this "stock" of population that the urban community is continually being fed. Urban areas depend upon rural areas for repopulation. The Church has to convert adults after they come to the city, but it is obviously easier to convert persons in the formative years. If we wish to have a growing church population we must Christianize them in the rural areas. It is no sentimentalism on the part of one large church group that they are emphasizing rural work. It is a simple matter of putting two and two together and getting four. And, there are old people in the rural areas. One person out of 10 is 65 years of age, or older, in our town and country parts of the country. What happens when the rural area has a large group of children to educate and a modest tax rate and a school board dominated by oldsters interested only in keeping the tax rate moderate? There is a need in town-country areas for Christian fellowship and a sense of responsibility towards others.

The Second reason for emphasizing rural work is that rural people take care of us, and their care for us is more than a matter of **noblesse oblige**. The rural people provide the fundamental needs of life; if they do not care for the earth, the city will become hungry and cold. Rural people tend the fundamental resources upon which we all depend. You can ignore the rural Church if you are willing to give up food, heat, clothes and light.

Third, rural people are in need. Our duty is to serve needy people. Participation in Christ's Kingdom involves feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, visiting the sick. In the most prosperous rural areas, less than half the people have running water. Their health is important. There is a lack of hospital beds. Many counties do not have resident physicians, nor proper hospital facilities. All the way down the line, the people have needs, and the Church can help them meet these needs.

Rockwell Smith, in his address at the Mid-Winter Alumni meeting, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary, Jan. 1950.

A SUMMARY OF THE MT. VERNON SEMINAR

By The Very Rev. Edward J. Bubb

The theme of the Rev. Dargan Butt's five stimulating lectures was "Practical Theology in Town and Country Areas." The brief summary given here can only touch upon the highlights of his talk.

Because of population shifts in this country the small town has become the most logical place for the Episcopal Church to put forth its greatest effort and spend its money to best advantage. Fortunately our Church is now located in many of these rapidly growing small towns. The city parish has a big stake in this field, since it is fed by people from these towns, but many city parishes have to be converted to the philosophy of spreading the kingdom where it will in the end count the most for them . . . the small towns surrounding city areas.

Rural life in America has changed more in the past 50 years than all rural life changed during the previous 5,000. This does not mean it will remain static. We must be alert to changing trends, and direct our program of expansion accordingly. The Church today must be aware of changing rural patterns, and constantly work to meet the challenges of the changes.

Dargan Butt pointed out, prior to the diocesan reports we heard, that a general lack of planning rural work on the part of dioceses is often evident. The diocesan reports given at this meeting generally bear out this statement. While your bishop should see some positive change in your local work after attending these seminars year after year, you also have the responsibility of making your voice heard and your experience and study evaluated and acted upon by the diocesan authorities. You have the "know how" and ought to be able to give good direction to diocesan planning.

To further assist our town-country expansion we will have to obtain further help from consecrated lay workers. They can assist us greatly in our work. It may even be so that these men should study for ordination and enter Holy Orders without the usual seminary education and degree.

We must further get acquainted with the secular agencies in our area. They can assist us in building up our work in the small town. We can assist them in spreading their good work of community and family improvement. If we take an interest in their work and program they will become our strongest allies, and mutual cooperation will be the rule for the strengthening of our work and theirs.

What kind of religious life will the rural areas of America have in the future? Dargan Butt says it will be "catholic and sacramental, with a real expression of worship." The Episcopal Church has the means at hand to give to rural America these three religious needs. Since the trend is in this direction, the Episcopal Church ought to grow strongly in rural areas. It will if we take it there and plant its roots firmly.

There are millions in the rural field that are not Christian. If statistics are to be trusted, we are neglecting these people. Our records show that our growth comes either from the reproduction of our own members, or else through obtaining members formerly belonging to other church bodies. We need to convert the unconverted. If we analyze the source of personnel for conversion and membership we can find they fall into four groups: Breed, Greed, Feed, Seed. The first are those raised in the Episcopal Church. The second group we proselyte. We as a church try less to proselyte, and have more success than any other group. The third group are those transferred to us from other Episcopal parishes. The last is the least tried, converting the unconverted. The proper seed planted among persons in this group will bring a rich harvest.

How can we make our influence be felt? We must first of all be humble and sincere as we deal with the small town parish. Rural people will not stand insincerity. After we have earned their confidence we should expand our efforts to places near the town. Our objective should be clearly defined. Our field is the entire county, or larger area surrounding the town parish. This may include hamlets where we can gather together small congregations, Sunday Schools, or guilds. Then there are also the isolated individuals whom we must not neglect to serve. We should develop mutual interest between all these groups, and bring them the minis-

trations of the Church. Our greatest source of help and inspiration is our sacramental and supernatural religion. This should not necessarily be our spring-board alone to convert the community, but rather like our Lord, we should use all things our people are concerned with in order to cement a bond of understanding. The best way to understand people is to visit them. There is nothing more important than pastoral calls. When you visit have a purpose and determine to accomplish that mission. An aimless call is like chaff in the wind. Use scripture and prayer if occasion presents itself to make a more effective call, especially if there is a sick person in the household. Be sure to pray with every sick child. Use publications to leave reminders of your visit as well as aids to emphasize the purpose or objective of your visit. Often by visiting many families within a small area a clergyman can develop a nucleus of families together for whom he can hold services, and perhaps establish a preaching station or Sunday school, and extend the sacraments to those who require and are ready for them.

Dean Victor Bolle in his talk pointed out one of the distinct advantages of the associate mission is the stability it gives to the communicants of small missions or preaching stations. In the larger plan of associated missions the members feel that the Church "is now here to stay." He set forth the idea that the associate mission is dedicated to "serving people." It is a method of solving the modern problem of many small towns located in a compact area, where each town is too small to support a resident clergyman alone.

In this seminar we have had imparted much "know how", some of which is familiar, some new. A review of the old, and the learning of the new challenges us and inspires us to prayerful action and enthusiasm for better work. They will bear us up in moments of despair and discouragement. We realize we do not work alone. We are sharing with an eternal priesthood the joy of spreading Jesus Christ and the Blessed Gospel of the Resurrection to people in town and country areas who look to us to be fed.

THE LORD'S ACRE

Now is the time in most areas when thoughts are turning to spring planting. Now is the time, also, to plan a parish Lord's Acre project. The Farmers' Federation at 131 Roberts St., Asheville, N. C., will be glad to send you information upon this method of raising money for special projects in your parish. The next issue of CROSSROADS will carry an article on the Lord's Acre program.

The country church needs the Lord's Acre plan because it first of all helps to enlist all ages in sacrificial Christian work. Secondly, it brings financial support for special needs and advances. Third, it deepens the recognition that God is the source of all life and growth, and that man should be a good steward of the soil. Fourth, it trains people in Christian stewardship. Fifth, it serves to gain the cooperation of many agencies for building Christian communities. Sixth, it helps raise up leadership for the Kingdom of God.

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You can do much to help advance our Church in Town and Country

Membership in the Rural Workers' Fellowship means more than merely receiving helpful literature from the organization. Whether you are a lay man or woman, whether you are a clergyman or other church worker, whether you live in country, town or city, membership in the R.W.F. identifies you as being a person vitally interested in serving God in town and country areas.

You help promote national and local fellowship of all persons interested in town and country church work.

You help encourage the ministers working in this area of the Church's mission.

You aid in developing spiritual growth among the fellowship.

You give the National Council, and its Division of Town and Country work, your support, advice, co-operation, and encourage them in their great task.

You assist your Diocesan program for the advancement of the Church in its town and country areas.

You enlarge the boundaries of your local parish into a new vision, growth, action, and fellowship of all those who are in your larger community.

You assist in the preaching the of Gospel of Christ to the town and country areas in this hemisphere.

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